

of the year we find the following statement: "Les quatres premières rémiges noires sur les barbes exterieures et à leur bout, mais blanches sur les barbes interieures; *les trois suivantes cendrées en dehors, et la point blanches.*"<sup>1</sup> (Italics mine.) That a part of the primaries are increasingly white tipped, and the secondaries largely so in birds of the first year, is also shown to be true by Dr. Taczanowski.<sup>2</sup> The contrary is the case in *Larus philadelphia* which has all the primaries, and even the secondaries, broadly black tipped, merely surmounted so to speak with small white spots. Thus the posterior border of the wing is entirely black in the latter species. In *Larus franklinii* the outer *five* or *six* primaries, in this plumage, are black on both webs.<sup>3</sup>

In view of this, unless it can be shown that Swainson and Richardson are in error, in their detailed statement, it seems that the British American record should be reinstated. We have still one hopeless report to notice in closing. I refer to Temminck's statement that "this bird appears also in Greenland."<sup>4</sup>

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### GENERAL NOTES.

**The Red-billed Tropic-bird in Arizona.**— In 'The Auk' for October, 1905 (Vol. XXII, p. 408), Mr. George F. Breninger recorded a specimen of the Yellow-billed Tropic-bird taken near Phoenix, Arizona, in April, 1905. This bird, which, among others, was recently presented by Dr. L. C. Sanford to the American Museum of Natural History, proves to be a Red-billed Tropic-bird (*Phaëthon athereus*). The dull yellowish color of the bill, which doubtless led to the error in identification, is a mark of immaturity, as is also the broad and unelongated pair of central tail-feathers.

Mr. W. W. Cooke informs me that there is no other Arizona record of the Yellow-billed Tropic-bird. Hence the species must be removed from the list of birds of that territory and its place taken by the Red-billed

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<sup>1</sup> Man. d'Orn., II, p. 788.

<sup>2</sup> Mem. St. Peter. Ac., VIII, S., XXXIX, ii, pp. 1043, 1044.

<sup>3</sup> Coues, Bds. Northwest, p. 655.

<sup>4</sup> Man. d'Orn., IV, 1840, p. 490.

species of which there seems to be no previous Arizona record. The date given on the label of this specimen is April 10, 1905.—W. DE W. MILLER, *American Museum of Natural History, New York City.*

**Status of the Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*) in Colorado.**—The appellation of that form of Black Duck found in Colorado is certainly having its quota of vicissitudes, which may in part be accounted for by the fact that it is a rare species in our State, only four absolute records having been made to date. It may be well to note here another specimen—a mounted bird (a male) in the Colorado Museum of Natural History, Denver. It was taken by W. N. W. Blayhey at Loveland, Colorado, in 1907. This specimen and one in the writer's collection are the only two known birds available for identification.

In 'The Birds of Colorado,' by W. W. Cooke, March, 1897, our form of this duck is given as, "*Anas obscura*. Black Duck....An eastern species finding in Colorado its most western extension." In the first supplement to this volume, March, 1898, the same name is retained. In the second supplement, May, 1900, Mr. Cooke changes the name of our form of this duck and refers it to the more southwestern type in the following words: "In place of 133, *Anas obscura*. Black Duck. Put 134a. *Anas fulvigula maculosa*. Mottled Duck. Although no specimens of this duck taken in Colorado have been examined by the present writer, yet there can be no doubt that the three specimens reported really belong to this subspecies."

We wonder why Mr. Cooke felt justified in making such an unqualified statement in view of the fact that this change to *Anas fulvigula maculosa* was made by him wholly on geographical grounds. It appears also that the original reference of our form to *Anas obscura* was also made entirely on geographical grounds.

In the light of subsequent events we are again reminded of how unsafe it is to refer any bird to any particular form purely on geographical grounds, without a single specimen ever having been identified as belonging to such form, unless it is stated clearly that there is a question as to the form to which it should be referred. When it has been once indubitably established that a certain form, be it, for example, a certain subspecies, is found in any given locality we of course have the right to consider all the birds of this type reported from this locality as being of this particular subspecies until another subspecies has been discovered.

Since the appearance of the second supplement to 'The Birds of Colorado' it has been assumed by Colorado ornithologists that our form of Black Duck is *Anas fulvigula maculosa* (Mottled Duck), as is evidenced by recent writings. The present writer never having seen more than the one specimen referred to above as being in his own collection, and not wishing to trust in a final test the obscurities of book descriptions on a female bird of semi-pronounced characters, noted a possible change of name on the specimen's tag from *Anas obscura* to *Anas fulvigula maculosa*